

From the Editor

A POPULAR theme in religious literature is the journey into the wilderness. There the protagonist would endure great hardship, suffering and trial. He would emerge from the desert with a profound knowledge of his strengths and weaknesses and with his mission and purpose on Earth crystal clear.

For a modern-day desert ordeal, Steve Harding takes us to the Mojave Desert in "Stryker in the Spotlight," where the Army's first Stryker Combat Brigade Team was put to the test during Exercise Millennium Challenge 2002.

While fasting often was a part of ancient desert religious experiences, today's desert warriors are in no danger of going hungry. In "From Horse Blood to Hot Pockets," Heike Hasenauer takes a look at the evolution of Army rations. And in "Kitchen Artistry," Beth Reece takes us to Fort Lee, Va., for a look at the making of Army chefs.

Finally, Beth journeys to the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School at Fort Jackson, S.C., for a look at the making of Army chaplains.

All of us at Soldiers wish you the happiest of holidays.

John C. Suttle

USMA Athlete

I'd like to respond to CPT Joe Berger's October Feedback letter complaining about West Point graduate Andy Lundbohm leaving the service to play professional hockey — before his five-year military commitment had been fulfilled.

I am willing to wager that the number of U.S. Military Academy graduates who actually get the opportunity to compete in professional sports is less than one half of one percent per year.

Like economics, athletes hit a point (or an age) of diminishing returns. On average, this age is around 24. It would therefore not be feasible for some of these gifted men and women to soldier for five years and then try to play their respective sports at their peak levels.

In most cases of these select one or two per year, part of the athlete's contract goes to paying the Army a large sum of money. If CPT Berger could pay half of his \$200,000 contract to chase his dream, I imagine that he would do it, too.

*CPT Jamie Uptgraft
Fort Hood, Texas*

We've had many letters regarding Andy Lundbohm's apparently abbreviated active military career, so we contacted West Point for clarification. We received the following reply from Joseph V. Tombrillo, the chief of command information in West Point's Public Affairs Office:

"Andrew Alan Lundbohm, USMA Class of 1999, graduated and was commissioned a

More Poster Praise

I'm a member of the California National Guard, and am working in the California Department of Justice's Anti-Terrorism Information Center. I put up the "Army of One" poster from the September issue, and everyone loved it!

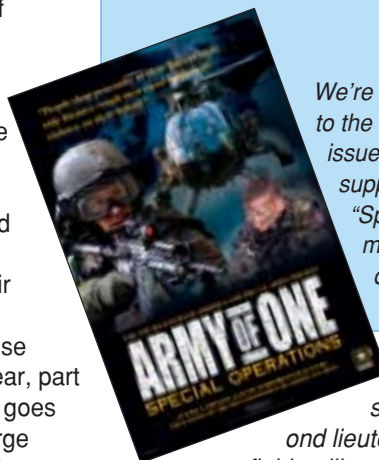
Here's my question: How can I get more copies of the poster and the magazine?

*SGT William Heintz
via e-mail*

I'm sure you've received lots of similar requests, but how can I obtain a copy of the "Army of One" poster that was in the September issue? The copy had already been removed before the magazine reached our unit.

*SPC Thomas C. Wilkinson
Fort Pickett, Va.*

We're pleased at the very positive response to the "Let's Roll" poster from the September issue. For additional copies, contact us while supplies last. For additional copies of the "Special Operations" poster in this month's issue, ask your publications officer to order DA POSTER 360-213 DEC 02.



*sec-
ond lieutenant, field artillery, on May 29, 1999. His active-duty service obligation upon graduation and commissioning was five years.*

Part of the confusion on Andy Lundbohm may be that from 1997 on, all graduates of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point received Army Reserve commissions. All were required to serve on active duty. Before this, all graduates were commissioned in the Regular Army. Another issue, and perhaps of greatest consequence, is that whatever was worked out between LT Lundbohm and the Army was done after his graduation from West Point.

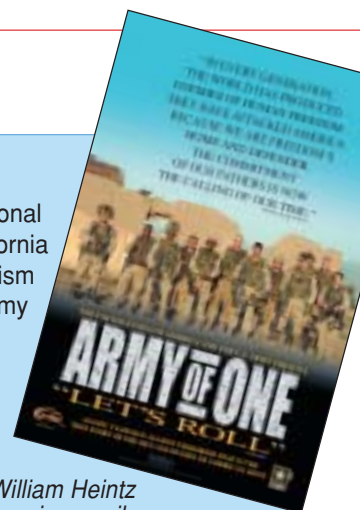
We are aware of some

exceptions granted by U.S. Total Army Personnel Command to lieutenants for early release from the active-duty service obligation on a case-by-case basis, but these were normally for downsizing issues within specific year groups. We do not know if LT Lundbohm asked for or was granted one of these exceptions."

No Printed LES?

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service "MyPay" Web site has an option that allows service members to stop the hard-copy delivery of their leave and earning statements (LESs). The reason given for going to electronic-only LESs is that it gives more privacy and saves money.

The problem is that turning



off the hard-copy delivery option does not work for Army personnel. A DFAS person I spoke with had talked to the EMSS people, who said that Army commanders need the LESSs for some reason.

But the MyPay site does not mention this requirement for Army personnel. So LESSs — which carry our Social Security numbers, bank account numbers and pay information — continue to be seen by several people before they get to us.

Doesn't sound real secure, does it?

*MSG Kenneth R. Shepherd
Evansville, IN*

More on the Beret

I happened across the discussion about the issuing of the black beret while perusing September's "Feedback," and have since read the entire

series, from the original letter to the latest reply in the October edition.

In line with SSG Scott's point, I cheerfully volunteer to send our anonymous comrade in arms my one beret, through the good offices of the "Soldiers" staff, so that he/she can use their clothing allowance on something else.

After all, it *is* the mission of the Reserve to support our active-duty brethren.

*SPC Richard C. Adams
via e-mail*

Soldiers — whether active, National Guard or Reserve — should realize that the black berets, like any other equipment item, have to be issued in some logical order. And, just as with the M-4 rifle, fielding of the beret began with the units that were the most deployable.

It truly blows my mind that so many soldiers would even

feel it necessary to write letters justifying how "important" they and their units are, and how it's so necessary for them to get black berets at the same time as everyone else.

Anyone who truly thinks it through would realize that the

black beret is only a form of headgear, not a mission-essential piece of equipment, and its absence won't keep any real soldiers from doing their jobs.

*SSG James Ortega
Fort Bragg, N.C.*

Soldiers is for soldiers and DA civilians. We invite readers' views. Stay under 150 words — a post card will do — and include your name, rank and address. We'll withhold your name if you desire and may condense your views because of space. We can't publish or answer every one, but we'll use representative views. Write to: **Feedback, Soldiers**, 9325 Gunston Road, Suite S108, Fort Belvoir, VA 22060-5581, or e-mail: soldiers@belvoir.army.mil.



Order Processing Code:

*** 5905**

☐ YES, please send _____ subscriptions to: **Soldiers**

The total cost of my order is \$ _____.

Name or title (Please type or print)

Company name Room, floor, suite

Street address

City State Zip code+4

Daytime phone including area code

Purchase order number (optional)



Credit card orders are welcome!

Fax your orders (202) 512-2250

Phone your orders (202) 512-1800

(SOL) at \$38 each (\$53.20 foreign) per year.

Price includes regular shipping & handling and is subject to change.

Check method of payment:

☐ Check payable to: Superintendent of Documents

☐ GPO Deposit Account ☐

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

☐

(expiration date)

☐

Authorizing signature

Date

Mail to: Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15250-7954

Important: Please include this completed order form with your remittance.

Thank you for your order!

